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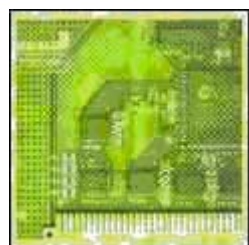
FT Creative Business

Technology

The audience's cut

By Alan Cane

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Michela Ledwidge is a filmmaker and VJ. VJ? All right, since you ask, it means, by analogy with DJ, video jockey. Ledwidge is out to create an entirely new sort of film-watching experience and has rustled up £125,000 from the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts to make films with which cinemagoers can interact.

No, we're not talking about the hackneyed idea of alternative endings. Ledwidge says her idea is more akin to audio sampling, where artists cut and paste from existing music to

create new music.

She wants to make it possible for film-goers to fiddle with films using a PC or a console, reassembling them in an order of their own choosing: "No cinema-quality film has ever been given to its audience in pieces in the form of a library of remixable art. No director has encouraged the audience to tamper with the work to this degree."

She has already produced some brief prototypes. Now she is preparing, with NESTA support, to film a short, Sanctuary, to test her ideas: "It will be a little like a computer game," she says. "I don't want to pre-empt the audiences' ideas. I'm giving them the tools to treat film as if it was a musical instrument." The film should be ready for distribution by July next year.

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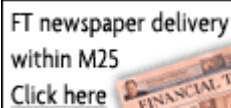
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